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Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4138th Meeting
Thursday, 11 May 2000, 10.50 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Duval
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ag Oumar
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Cherif
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Security Council Mission on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) (S/2000/363)

00-42669 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Security Council Mission on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) (S/2000/363)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Security Council Mission on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), document S/2000/363.

I give the floor to Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Head of the Security Council Mission on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): It is a great honour for me to present to the Security Council the report of the Council mission on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), which visited Kosovo from 27 to 29 April this year. The report is in four sections, comprising the terms of reference of the mission, its composition, its activities and summary of meetings and, finally, the findings of the mission. It has 36 paragraphs, contained in these sections.

From the moment of the mission's arrival in Kosovo, its programme was very full and intense. It undertook a series of meetings with key actors, on-site visits to a number of places and encounters with representatives of various ethnic communities. The mission criss-crossed Kosovo, from north to south and east to west, from Mitrovica to Prizren and from Gnjilane to Djakovica, with Pristina as its hub.

We had an opportunity to have a series of in-depth discussions and interactions with various key people from the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), in addition to those with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Bernard Kouchner, and the Commander of the Kosovo Force, General Juan Ortuño. We believe that the intensity of the visit and the tightness of the programme, accompanied by the richness of inputs, yielded very good results in terms of the objectives of the mission. Future missions of the Security Council could surely benefit from this experience.

The situation in Kosovo is extremely complex. Equally complex is the process of implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). Council members were able to realize, possibly for the first time, the magnitude of the task of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as we stepped through the programme, with each element bringing out a new dimension of UNMIK's work. As I said at concluding press conference in Pristina and elsewhere, the Security Council could not have envisaged such wide-ranging involvement of the United Nations in Kosovo when it adopted resolution 1244 (1999). Every day brings a new challenge, or the resurfacing of one tackled earlier. The leadership of UNMIK and of KFOR is engaged seriously in addressing these challenges with the determination and promptness that the occasion demands. The spirit of the staff of the international civil and security presences in Kosovo is very high, and the mission was extremely impressed by their teamwork and collaboration.

In the section on the activities of the mission, the report provides details, and I would recommend that Council members pay close attention to them.

A return to normalcy is gradually taking place in Kosovo. Economic activities are slowly picking up. However, the security situation poses a major and continuing challenge to UNMIK and KFOR. During the visit of the mission, a few violent incidents took place, making us comprehend better the reality of the situation.

In its interaction with the ethnic communities, the mission could sense the clear desire of people to live together in peace and engage in economic reconstruction and the restitution of law and order. The mission made use of every possible opportunity to send a strong message to the ethnic communities to reject all violence, to promote stability, safety and security and to cooperate fully with UNMIK in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We are pleased to say that the mission's message was taken seriously, with the full understanding that a multi-ethnic society presents the best hope for the people of Kosovo.

The upcoming municipal election and the civilian and voter registration process, which commenced during the visit of the Mission, will be a major challenge for the United Nations in Kosovo in the coming months. The issue of missing persons and detainees has emerged as one of the major impediments to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. This issue was highlighted, in particular, in the mission's meetings with families and communities that had been going through agony for months. Given the urgency of the situation, the mission felt that it was important to bring the matter regarding the appointment of a special envoy for missing persons and detainees to the attention of the Security Council. The return of internally displaced persons and refugees presents another impediment to this process, and needs to be addressed with caution and understanding.

The shortage in meeting the staffing requirements for both the civil administration and the civilian police was recognized by the mission as a serious constraint for UNMIK operations. The mission would therefore ask that necessary steps be taken in this regard by the Secretariat and contributing countries with absolute seriousness and urgency.

I will read out verbatim the section on the findings of the mission in order for the Council to comprehend fully the areas, both general and specific, which will require its subsequent attention.

Before I do so, let me take this opportunity to convey our sincere thanks to the Government of Italy for making excellent arrangements for our transportation to Kosovo and our return from Rome. On behalf of the mission, I would like to convey our special thanks, and would request the Permanent Representative of Italy, Ambassador Vento, to convey this to his Government. I also thank, on behalf of the mission, the Secretariat staff who accompanied the mission for their wonderful support for our work.

I shall now read out section IV of the report (S/2000/363), entitled "Findings of the Mission".

> "Since its deployment on 13 June 1999, UNMIK has made significant progress in implementing Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The full and effective implementation of the Security Council's mandate requires sustained effort by UNMIK and KFOR and the full participation of local communities, which in turn demand active engagement of and support by the international community. All ethnic communities expressed a desire to live in peace together, but due to the recent violent conflict they are still deeply divided and the healing will require a long time. Despite a steady improvement in the overall level of violence and criminality, attacks against minorities continue and special measures of protection must constantly be maintained. KFOR's continued assistance in protecting minorities and joint security operations with UNMIK police thus remain vital.
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> "Inadequate physical, social and economic security remains a major concern. Lack of freedom of movement, access to education, health care, social services and employment hampers the return of internally displaced persons, primarily Serbs and the Roma, and significantly impedes the integration of ethnic minorities into public life. Regarding possibilities for reconciliation, there have been some positive signs, such as the general apology issued by the Serb community of Orahovac and the subsequent declaration from the Kosovo Albanian community at Orahovac inviting Serbs to stay and to cooperate in the future development of the community.
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> "Progress towards peaceful coexistence remains fragile. The painful issues of all missing persons and detainees, continuing violence, and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees continue to be major impediments to reconciliation and undermine the efforts to create a climate of tolerance and security. The Mission noted the strong support of the different ethnic communities for the appointment of a special envoy for detainees and missing persons. Given its urgency, the Mission undertook to report that support to the Council.
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> "The lack of an effective and unbiased rule of law in Kosovo was a recurring theme at many of the Mission's meetings. The Mission notes that UNMIK's intention to recruit international judges and prosecutors and their staff to work alongside their local counterparts will be critical to redress the perceived culture of impunity which currently undermines the judicial system. If UNMIK is to increase the effectiveness of the Kosovo judiciary, substantial voluntary assistance, both in personnel and material resources, is required. As regards the lack of sufficient policing resources, it is imperative for UNMIK to continue accelerating its training programmes for the Kosovo Police Service. The multi-ethnic and gender-sensitive Kosovo Police Service development programme and the OSCE-led

Kosovo Police School should serve as models for future institutions in Kosovo. The Mission was appreciative of the fact that human rights education and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) awareness are part of UNMIK's police curriculum.

"While noting the serious staffing constraints faced by UNMIK in civil administration and police, the Mission recognizes the significant imbalance in wages between its locally recruited civil service staff and the rest of the Kosovo population (a similar situation exists in United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor operations). It feels that both issues should be pursued through the appropriate General Assembly process.

"To ensure an organized, expeditious and sustainable return, significant resources will be required in order to create appropriate conditions for the returnees by increasing Kosovo's absorbing capacity.

"The recent participation of the Serbs as observers in the Joint Interim Administrative Structures, including the Kosovo Transitional Council and the Interim Administrative Council, is encouraging and hopefully will lead to their full participation and a larger representation of non-Albanians in the Structures. Bosniac and Roma representatives, however, have yet to join the Transitional Council. At the same time, the Mission noted that a major effort by the international presences and long-term nurturing will be necessary to achieve progress in reconciliation. Nonetheless, the Mission noted several examples of more positive relations between communities at the local level. Discussions at this level are less politically charged and focus on practical modes of cooperation. Efforts to promote cooperation and interface between ethnic communities at the local level, including the establishment of multi-ethnic municipal councils, administrative boards and rapid-impact employment projects, could foster peaceful coexistence.

"The civil and voter registration processes in Kosovo, in view of the forthcoming municipal elections, have just begun. It is unfortunate, however, that all factions of the Kosovo Serb community have chosen not to participate in this process, due to the current lack of physical security and freedom of movement. Substantial efforts by UNMIK and KFOR, backed up by the strong support of the international community, are essential to encourage and create the conditions for Serb participation, including those who are displaced outside Kosovo.

"The Mission welcomes the renewal of contacts between leaders of both communities in Mitrovica, and believes that joint community-based programmes, which it had an opportunity to observe while there, have a potential for confidence-building and reconciliation.

"The Mission notes UNMIK's intention to continue working to establish a Joint Committee, which is aimed at enhancing productive dialogue with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities. KFOR is continuing to maintain regular contact with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities on military issues within the framework of the Joint Implementation Committee.

"The Mission is cognizant of the imperative for UNMIK to foster economic recovery as a means of underpinning confidence-building and reconciliation efforts at the local level. The Mission welcomes the deployment of economic reconstruction representatives of the European Union at the municipal level. It further supports UNMIK's view that economic investment priorities must be guided by UNMIK to ensure maximum effectiveness of donated funds. Property issues, however, remain unresolved, and could potentially undermine international efforts aimed at the economic recovery of Kosovo and even peace initiatives by UNMIK.

"The Mission feels that detailed information on KFOR's activities in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) should be provided to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1160 (1998).

"It was emphasized to the Mission that UNMIK has only been deployed for some 10 months, and that as a result there should be realistic expectations of what it could achieve in that limited period. Healing the wounds inflicted by the conflict will take time. Reconciliation is a long and protracted process, and the international community must be patient and persistent. UNMIK and KFOR have made significant progress in implementing their mandates and must be commended for their efforts, often made under difficult and challenging circumstances. The Mission notes the enormity of

the task faced by UNMIK, and commends in particular its efforts in the capacity and institution-building areas. Further efforts to ensure full implementation of its resolution 1244 (1999) remain a high priority of the Security Council.

"The Mission wishes to pay a well-deserved tribute to Mr. Kouchner for his outstanding leadership of UNMIK and his commitment to the success of the Security Council objectives in Kosovo. The Mission also expresses appreciation to General Ortuño, Commander of KFOR, for his determined efforts and commitment. The hard work and dedication of their collaborators and the entire staff of UNMIK and KFOR, have earned the praise of the Mission. The Mission is deeply appreciative of all the support provided by UNMIK and KFOR which was crucial to its success." (*S/2000/363*)

Let me conclude by saying, as has been mentioned repeatedly in our report, that the healing of wounds and the process of reconciliation may take a long time, but the international community cannot afford to relent. It has invested in Kosovo in a big and positive way and it cannot afford to fail.

Mr. Duval (Canada): I would like to begin my intervention by thanking Ambassador Chowdhury for the impressive leadership that he displayed as head of the Security Council mission to Kosovo. He constantly and very eloquently found the right words to convey to the communities we visited the essential message of our mandate: reject violence, ensure public safety and order, promote stability, safety and security, support full and effective implementation of Council resolution 1244 (1999) and fully cooperate with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to this end. I can attest to his intelligent determination, good judgement and generous humanism — qualities that ensured our trip was exhaustive and our findings intellectually rigorous and just. Ambassador Chowdhury honoured the Security Council. For that I thank him warmly.

(*spoke in French*)

Today's meeting is a critical aspect of the Security Council's mission to Kosovo, for the findings contained in the report make clear that both the broader United Nations membership and the Security Council itself must be attentive to the achievements in the field and play an active role in supporting the efforts of UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR). This requires us to support the mission in terms of ideas, messages and, above all, resources.

Having participated in the mission and in the drafting of the report that Ambassador Chowdhury presented, my delegation agrees without reservation with the findings and observations contained in the section entitled "Findings of the Mission". There is little we can add to the report, but there are four areas that we would like briefly to highlight concerning our responsibilities as members of the Security Council and the United Nations.

First is the security situation. There is no question that the success of UNMIK and the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) depend first on ensuring human security for all residents of Kosovo. This is our priority task.

As the report outlines, adequate social, economic and, most importantly, physical security is crucial to building a functioning and pluralistic society. We can assist efforts to stabilize the situation and progressively improve human security in Kosovo in a number of ways: by sending, as did the mission, clear messages to the local communities that violence will not be tolerated by the international community; by providing UNMIK with the civilian police resources it requires to ensure personal safety and social order; and by supporting locally, at the community level, social and economic reconstruction efforts in order to restore the fabric of normal life after the devastation and violence that the Government of Belgrade so brutally wrought.

Second is the question of missing and detained persons. Those of us on the mission could not fail to note the importance of this issue for the thousands of Kosovars who await news each day — many of whom have been waiting for over a year — of missing family members who have simply disappeared from their lives. The hope of these people is that their missing family members are detained; the fear, however, is that they are lying in one of the many mass graves that have yet to be exhumed. We have to act on this issue, and we can do so in different ways. We can support the efforts of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in Kosovo. The need for forensic work is immense. Under a recently signed agreement, Canada will provide 21 forensic experts over the coming months to assist in the Tribunal's investigation of war crimes in Kosovo. They will be part of an international effort that will examine more than 300 suspected mass graves. Also, the Security Council needs to consider appointing a

special envoy for detainees and missing persons, a concept supported by both Serbian and Albanian representatives with whom we met. Such an envoy would bring attention and political will to an issue that requires both. In the view of my delegation, this issue is an essential part of the process of the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and is crucial to the stabilization and reconciliation efforts in Kosovo.

A third issue we would like to mention is that of the return of refugees. Ensuring the successful return of refugees who were forced from their homes last year requires many of the improvements in the social, economic and physical security we have already mentioned. But countries of origin also have the responsibility to ensure that UNMIK is aware of expected flows of refugees back to Kosovo and that it is capable of handling their reintegration into society. We must facilitate and not make more difficult this important development. Ultimately, and by definition, refugee returns are a positive sign that UNMIK is building a society to which people want to return to live. We want to arrive at a point where Kosovar residents of all ethnicities who were expelled or left due to physical intimidation or insecurity can return to their homes.

Lastly, there is a more fundamental issue for which the Security Council has absolute responsibility — the active support of this body for the work of the United Nations in Kosovo. The United Nations Mission in Kosovo is not perfect; and while we have the right to offer constructive suggestions on ways to improve it, we also have the responsibility to ensure that it is properly staffed and financed. Judging from what I witnessed during the Security Council mission, UNMIK is doing excellent work under the strong leadership of Mr. Kouchner. Everywhere the mission went to meet with local communities, including both Serbs and Albanians, often torn apart by hatred, pain and fear — everywhere — Mr. Kouchner was received warmly by the population, as a friend. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General should be congratulated for fostering such trust and confidence with all ethnic communities, and he should be supported by those of us who value the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

Let us be absolutely clear: the success of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo depends on the resolute engagement of each and every member of the Council and the Organization. We here dictate to a large extent how well UNMIK can do its job — by the provision of financial and personnel resources, by the moral and legal leadership this Council provides and by sending a consistent message that supports, rather than undermines, the efforts of UNMIK and the Kosovo Force to bring about a society in Kosovo that can function in accordance with the principles of the United Nations.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I, too, would like first of all to associate myself with the words of gratitude addressed to Ambassador Chowdhury, who so skilfully and steadfastly guided our mission. Like all our colleagues participating in that mission, we concur with the findings in the report and, on the whole, we consider that the report reflects in a balanced and open way the current situation regarding the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The only exception to that is paragraph 36, the last paragraph of the report, which was agreed by us in Pristina in another form. I will now read out the wording that was agreed:

> "The Mission wishes to express deep gratitude to Mr. Kouchner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, to General Ortuño, Commander of KFOR, and to their staffs for their assistance and support."

That is the entire text of paragraph 36 as it was agreed by all members of the mission in Pristina. Apparently, the editors here in New York have tried to improve it in some way, but the text that we now find in the official document does not reflect the agreed position of the mission. We greatly appreciate the efforts being made by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and their entire staffs, under the most difficult conditions, to promote a full and comprehensive implementation of Council resolution 1244 (1999). The mission report indicates the positive results that have been reached in some areas.

However, the purpose of our mission was to see how resolution 1244 (1999) was being implemented, and, clearly, in so doing, while recognizing the positive elements, we did identify the problems that persist. Therefore, as we consider the report today and we think about how the Security Council might activate the process of implementing resolution 1244 (1999), I find it absolutely necessary to focus first and foremost on the problems and shortcomings. In that regard, I would like, as Ambassador Duval has done, immediately to address the security problem. All the minority representatives with whom we met in Kosovo said with one voice that

they do not feel safe, that they do not have freedom of movement, and that they experience discrimination in employment, access to health care and in a number of other areas. Those minorities also noted that they can carry out a dialogue among themselves but that as soon as it comes to a dialogue with representatives of the majority, then serious difficulties crop up immediately. That finding is reflected in the mission's report.

Terrorist acts continue. Churches are bombed, and there are instances of killing. In this connection we must of course be very cautious vis-à-vis the statistics that the UNMIK command provides regarding the stark drop in the level of crime in Kosovo. The United Nations Police Commissioner, Mr. Sven Frederickson, recognized that the drop in the level of crime can to a large extent be explained by the reduction in the number of representatives of minorities in the main areas of settlement.

Of course, we could all become convinced that Pristina is beginning to look like a living city, and efforts are being made there to return to normalcy, establish an infrastructure, and so on. But the question is: who can live normally in that city? There are practically no Serbs left there, just as there are practically no Serbs in Prizren, Gnjilane and Peć. For all intents and purposes, those towns were subjected to ethnic cleansing, and now they are in essence ethnically cleansed.

Of great significance for that situation is the problem around Mitrovica. We are wholly in favour of Mitrovica becoming an integrated and multi-ethnic city. However, I myself did not hear an answer to the question of whether there will be a repetition in Mitrovica of the sad experience that occurred in Pristina, Peć, Gnjilane and Prizren when, under the slogan of a "multi-ethnic city", the minorities were in fact expelled.

I also wish to point out that in assessing the statistics in terms of the drop in crime we must bear in mind that the number of such crimes as arson and abduction is not going down. Since the deployment of the international presence in Kosovo, 900 persons have been abducted and, as we have been told, the results of the investigations of those crimes are still not known. Instances of arson, which number 10 per day, also attest to the fact that this is not a simple crime, but one aimed at intimidating, with a clear political overtone. It is therefore clear to our delegation that UNMIK and KFOR cannot, for the time being, guarantee security for all in Kosovo, as provided for in resolution 1244 (1999).

Of particular concern is the fact that representatives of the international presence are subjected to attack. For the time being, we find no way of punishing those who are guilty of that. I can recall that the murderer of a Russian staff member of UNMIK escaped from jail four times. At the moment, we do not know whether or not he has been arrested for a fifth time. The international presence also does not enjoy full freedom of movement in Kosovo. At any rate, this applies to the Russian contingent, which has not been able to deploy in the area of Orahovac. This is a serious infringement of the international presence.

We also noted the importance of the problem of controlling the activities of the Kosovo Protection Corps. Unfortunately, in spite of our requests, when we were in Kosovo we were not shown the report that was prepared by the UNMIK human rights group on the activities of the Kosovo Protection Corps. We hope that is not a secret report and that the Secretariat will be presenting it to us for consideration.

We continue to be convinced that the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) has not been fully disarmed. There is an enormous amount of weaponry in Kosovo. In that connection, monitoring the borders in accordance with resolution 1160 (1998), for the purpose of compliance with the arms embargo, is a priority task. We hope that the request that the mission members made regarding the need for more detailed information to the Security Council on compliance with the arms embargo will be met.

Given the lack of proper security, the problem of the return of internally displaced persons is not being resolved. According to various assessments there are many such people — between 200,000 and 300,000. Unfortunately, our question about when UNMIK will be prepared to implement that provision of resolution 1244 (1999) is one to which we did not receive a satisfactory reply. It was explained to us that conditions are not yet ripe for such a return, but we did not see that there was even a general concept of a return of displaced persons to Kosovo. I think this is a serious omission on the part of the UNMIK command.

While the return of Serbs and other minorities to Kosovo may be slowed by the lack of measures on the part of UNMIK to prepare the necessary conditions for that return, the return of Albanians from Western Europe is taking place on a regular basis. In our talks a concern was expressed that among those Kosovo Albanian

returnees there are many people who had been arrested in Western European countries for the commission of crimes who were then actually sent back to Kosovo. That process has to be followed very, very closely.

Nor did we receive a reply to our question regarding how many people who had not resided in Kosovo in the past came to Kosovo after the deployment of the international presence. It is essential to give greater attention to that question. It is no coincidence that the Security Council mission's report calls for a very thorough approach to the beginning of registration so as to prevent any further artificial disruption of the demographic balance, which has already been disrupted very seriously.

We also did not receive a reply to the question about the situation regarding the use of the territory of Kosovo for drug trafficking. The UNMIK leadership told us that that problem did not exist. However, we, and I am sure many other colleagues, are familiar with the information provided by non-governmental organizations according to which about 40 per cent of all heroin used in Western Europe travels through Kosovo.

In addressing the situation in Kosovo and the problem of the return of internally displaced persons and refugees there, we must bear in mind also that, on the basis of our observation, a pessimistic frame of mind prevails among the minorities in Kosovo. If the situation in the security sphere does not improve radically by the summer, many members of minorities intend to leave Kosovo in order to find some normal and tranquil place to live before the beginning of the school year. Therefore, the task of bringing about a radical change in the security situation is a priority, both for KFOR and the international police, which must be beefed up to the authorized level. That is also a task for the Kosovo Police Service, which is now being trained, and I am sure that here as well we must urgently resolve the question of the return of the Yugoslav police to Kosovo in the numbers agreed earlier.

Another problem that causes us concern is the implementation of the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999) that are connected with respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Paragraph 10 of that resolution states that the international civil presence in Kosovo is established with a view to provide an interim administration for Kosovo under which the people of Kosovo may enjoy substantial autonomy within the framework of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In other words, everything that UNMIK is now doing must correspond to that provision of the resolution and must ensure the functioning of Kosovo with substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. At present, that is not happening. We hope that the situation will change after the creation of the joint committee, and we think that this proposal, put forward by the UNMIK leadership and supported by the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, is very useful.

The mission noted this in the report, and we expect that in a very short time the joint committee will be set up and will begin its real work on resolving specific tasks. In that work, doubtless, we must take account of the negative experience of the past, when all of UNMIK's activities in administering Kosovo were not agreed with the official representatives of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We have referred to these facts on numerous occasions: taxation, licence plates for automobiles and the release of identity documents. We reiterate that, in the past, UNMIK issued birth certificates in which citizenship was indicated as Kosovar. We have been raising this question for a long time in the Security Council, and so far no one has been able to deny that fact. We note that since that time UNMIK has stopped issuing such birth certificates, but we would call upon the UNMIK and Secretariat leadership not to allow such violations of the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the future and to resolve all issues related to the functioning of this province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in consultation with the Belgrade authorities.

This is of particular significance for a problem such as that of property ownership in Kosovo. We have heard that UNMIK is preparing some kind of book on privatization and, again, is doing so without consultation with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities. Matters of property ownership are very dangerous and may have an adverse impact on the situation in Kosovo, including the efforts for a political settlement, as is noted in the Mission's report.

Therefore, we would strongly request that all the plans that are being made in UNMIK regarding privatization should not be kept secret from the Security Council. We also note the problem, directly connected with the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, of establishing foreign offices or missions in Kosovo. We would like to obtain information about the basis on which such offices are established. At any rate,

as far as we know, no one has seen any regulations on that matter. We hope that the Secretariat will be providing us with that information in our future work.

I referred earlier to the problem of the return of the agreed contingents of the Yugoslav Army and police, which has not been resolved. The political process to determine the future political status of Kosovo is being delayed.

We are mentioning this for one simple reason: all of these matters are mentioned in resolution 1244 (1999). It is clear that this resolution is far from being implemented. It is equally clear that we need to pay these problems particular attention in our further efforts to implement this resolution.

Today a great deal of attention has been paid to the question of missing persons. As Ambassador Chowdhury and Ambassador Duval pointed out, representatives of the Kosovo Albanians and of the Kosovo Serbs and the official representative of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia brought this problem to the attention of the mission. It goes without saying that this is a serious, painful and sensitive problem. However, we are convinced that the key to solving this problem, as well as to resolving many other issues regarding Kosovo, is finally establishing normal working relations with Belgrade.

We all know that the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have not rejected cooperation as a means of resolving these problems. At the same time, they want the fate of many thousands of Serbs who are among the missing in Kosovo to be clarified. As regards the readiness of the Belgrade authorities to cooperate, we know that they have received representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Jiri Dienstbier, and they are ready for further contacts. We also know that the representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Pristina regularly visits Belgrade, and we think that if UNMIK is seriously interested in resolving this missing-persons problem, it should work more actively on it in its contacts with representatives of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Two last questions, one of which concerns the lack of an agreement regarding the status of the international presence in Kosovo. We have raised this question before. We also touched upon it in the course of our talks with representatives of UNMIK and KFOR in Pristina, and they tell us that this question will be resolved without involving Belgrade; it will be resolved by UNMIK and KFOR finalizing a joint declaration. We find such an approach inappropriate. We call once again for the establishment of a normal agreement on the status of KFOR and UNMIK with the leaders of the host country.

In the course of the briefing given by the representatives of the humanitarian component in Kosovo we also heard that the problem of the return of displaced persons and refugees and the overall problem of returning to normalcy is being impeded by the large number of landmines in Kosovo. As of this date there are 3,000 anti-personnel landmines and 3,400 anti-tank mines in Kosovo, as well as a great deal of unexploded ordnance, including 3,000 cluster bombs. This is a very serious problem, which, it goes without saying, must be addressed.

There is also a problem connected to the use in Kosovo, in the course of the military actions by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), of weapons containing depleted uranium. We know that the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) set up a special panel that dealt with the environmental impacts of NATO's military action in Kosovo, and we know that its findings are very alarming. We would like that panel to continue its work so that the Security Council could be apprised of its findings. If we want to fully implement resolution 1244 (1999), we must know what the environmental situation is in those regions to which displaced persons are to return. Of course, we also need to know the situation in those regions where people are already living and are engaged in farming and other activities.

On the whole, the Security Council of course needs more and more detailed information about what is going on in Kosovo. In this connection, I must mention the recent media stories — in particular coming out of Germany — about the fact that, for some reason, a report of Finnish forensic experts who were working in Račak is being kept secret. We would like such things to be brought to the Security Council's attention, and we will be taking steps to learn about the findings of that report.

In conclusion, I would like once again to underscore that the Mission was extremely useful. It made it possible to learn about the situation in the field. It made it possible to agree upon important findings. We hope that the members of the Security Council will support those findings in their entirety, because it is important to

ensure a comprehensive approach to the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). Our delegation will do its utmost to that end.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank Ambassador Chowdhury for presenting the report of the Security Council mission to Kosovo. Every paragraph of this report is perfect. I would also like to thank Ambassador Chowdhury for the manner in which he was able to convey the sentiments and message of the Security Council with authority and force.

At the outset, I would like to raise a procedural point that is of great importance to France. As with the 9 May meeting on Bosnia and Herzegovina, today's meeting is also being held without either the European Union States that are not members of Council or the Presidency of the European Union being able to speak. Those States have not been able to speak to the Council about Kosovo for almost a year — in fact, since the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999). There is no good reason for this. I repeat, there is no good reason for this situation, given that the European Union and its member States are by far the major contributors to Kosovo, making an overall contribution of 8 billion euros for the years 1999-2000.

The Security Council mission to Kosovo was necessary and useful. It was necessary because of the considerable stakes of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for the region and for the United Nations. As regards the mission's utility: it allowed for the gathering, in the field, of the opinions of UNMIK's leaders; it provided a view of the extent of the difficulties they are dealing with every day; it provided a means of gauging the full range of popular sentiment, the people's suffering as well their hopes; and, finally, it provided an opportunity to urge moderation, the renunciation of violence and cooperation with UNMIK. The French delegation would therefore like to join others in congratulating Ambassador Chowdhury once again on his leadership of the mission. We would also like to thank the Secretariat, which enabled the report to be distributed so quickly.

Many of the points made in this precise and detailed report deserve to be highlighted, and I shall come back to them later. However, it would be a pity if the necessary consideration of specific points resulted in our failure to comment on the overall picture provided by the mission: the finding that remarkable progress has been made by UNMIK in less than a year and the justified tribute paid to Mr. Kouchner, as well as the reminder that the task entrusted to the mission is enormous, that reconciliation will not be achieved overnight, that the wounds will take time to heal and that impatience is not an appropriate response in certain areas.

There is no need for me to repeat the conclusions and proposals of the mission. They were made public upon the mission's return, and everyone is familiar with them. Suffice it to say that the very positive review of UNMIK by the mission, which did not omit discussion of areas where progress still needs to be made, is consistent with our assessment.

We believe that some issues deserve special attention, and in this connection I would like to raise five points. First, the launching of the registration campaign and the preparations for the forthcoming elections will, as the report notes, require strict follow-up. The municipal elections in the autumn will probably have a strong, positive democratic impact. However, it is essential for us to be very precise and rigorous with respect to the process of preparing for the ballot and to the conditions under which it will be held. The registration has begun under favourable conditions. Clearly, as the Council mission indicated, the difficulty lies in the current refusal of the Kosovar Serbs to participate in the process. It will be essential to do everything possible at the political level, as well as to make material preparations, to bring about Serb participation. The integration of Serbs into political life in Kosovo is at stake, as are the preparations for conditions for their future within Kosovo. More generally, the participation of all the communities in Kosovo's future is at stake.

My second comment relates to the fact that, to date, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Special Representative, the Serbian officials have decided to participate as observers in meetings of the Interim Administrative Council and the Kosovo Transitional Council. This is an important development in the desired direction. The mission also noted that there has been an improvement in relations among communities at the local level, perhaps because discussions at that level have been less political and more practical in nature. Gradually, therefore, within the context of co-administration, the conditions for associating all communities in the administrative management of Kosovo, and the foundations for their coexistence, are being established. It is now necessary to reinforce this trend. The benefits of this participation must be clearly seen in an improvement in the daily lives of the minorities so as to

strengthen the position of those who made such a courageous choice.

Thirdly, the improvement in the daily life of the minorities is essential to enable not only those who wish to remain in Kosovo, but also those who wish to return and to live there on a permanent basis, to do so. This improvement in daily life can be achieved simply by allowing the minority population to move around freely and to have access to schools, medical care and administrative services. Above all, it can be achieved by strengthening security conditions and providing protection against acts of ethnic violence and criminal activities of all kinds. The situation has improved, but unfortunately the mission found that UNMIK does not have the means to establish the rule of law. Priority should be given to sending international judges and prosecutors and to ending the culture of impunity. This is a simple requirement, but it is essential. Those responsible for crimes must be prosecuted, and the right to a fair trial must be ensured.

Fourthly, lasting reconciliation will also require a proper response to the question of detainees and missing persons, as the recent demonstrations in Pristina showed. The insecurity felt by families encourages mistrust and a desire for revenge. We therefore endorse the idea of appointing a special envoy for missing and detained persons, and coordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross will clearly be necessary in this regard. It goes without saying that the mandate of the special envoy should relate to missing and detained persons from all communities.

My fifth and final point is that relaunching economic activities and providing families with the prospect of finding work and returning to normal living conditions can have a pacifying effect. Many businesses have already started up again, and UNMIK has already done a great deal to establish the necessary framework for economic recovery and a resumption of investment. This is an aspect of the settlement that should not be neglected.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I, too, should like to thank Ambassador Chowdhury for his briefing today. I echo Ambassador Levitte's sentiment that the report is perfect in each paragraph. I also echo Ambassador Levitte's concern that it has not proved possible for some States members of the European Union with a close interest in Kosovo to express their views in this debate today.

Ambassador Chowdhury and the mission did an excellent job in Kosovo. They travelled widely, meeting representatives of all ethnic groups, and they produced an excellent report for us to study. We have looked at the report carefully and agree with its findings and recommendations.

Before commenting on the report in detail, I would like to underline its key finding. This Council set the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) an enormous challenge in resolution 1244 (1999). The mission is operating within its mandate as laid out in that resolution. Ably led by Bernard Kouchner, it has made very significant progress in circumstances that are far from ideal. There is still a long way to go, but we should all take this opportunity to put on record our thanks to Mr. Kouchner and his team for the excellent work they have done so far.

I would like to address three detailed issues raised in the report. First, the report makes clear that there is enormous public concern about the fate of those Kosovo Albanians who are detained elsewhere in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia or have been missing since the end of the conflict last year.

The international community's efforts to make progress on this issue need to be given a higher profile. The United Kingdom therefore strongly supports the appointment of a special envoy to look into the question, in cooperation with UNMIK. The Special Representative should address the fates of all detained and missing persons, regardless of their ethnic origin.

Secondly, the mission was right to highlight the importance of reinforcing the justice system in Kosovo. For our part, the United Kingdom stands ready to offer the United Nations some candidates for posts as international judges and prosecutors in Kosovo. The Kosovo Police School is doing fine work and its multi-ethnic character should serve as a model for other institutions, not least the Kosovo Protection Corps.

Thirdly, we agree that it is crucial to manage an orderly returns process for refugees, both from the rest of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and from abroad. Adequate security for all returnees is essential. We welcome the establishment of the Joint Committee on Returns to coordinate this process.

We should use this meeting to make one thing crystal clear. UNMIK is not only operating effectively, but it is also doing so within the mandate set out in

resolution 1244 (1999). And that resolution, as the mission has said, is being implemented.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): We, too, want to join in thanking Ambassador Chowdhury, not only for his report, but also for his excellent service in guiding this important mission. We commend him and all of the members of the mission on a job well done and for helping to improve the Council's understanding of the challenges that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) faces in Kosovo.

I also want to thank Ambassadors Levitte and Eldon for reminding us that the mission observed firsthand that significant progress has been made in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) in less than one year. There is lots of work to do, but there is definitely progress registered. We were also glad to see the mission's unqualified praise for Special Representative Kouchner, who has done a truly outstanding job of leading UNMIK in the most difficult of circumstances.

It was good that members of the Council were able to walk the ground and see firsthand Mr. Kouchner in action and the hard tasks and challenges that UNMIK faces. It was also good that members had a chance to see firsthand the effects of the violence and devastation inflicted by Belgrade in Kosovo and to understand more fully the problems which now exist. We hope that the visit also helps make more apparent the disingenuousness of speaking of Belgrade's interest in cooperation in support of UNMIK's mission.

As our Council colleagues witnessed firsthand, the situation in Kosovo, although improving, continues to be extremely difficult. The sustained attention and ample resources of the international community will be needed in order to implement fully resolution 1244 (1999). It is clear that UNMIK has set the right goals for the immediate future: consolidation of the rule of law and further work on the interim political framework.

There unquestionably continues to be a security gap in Kosovo. We believe that the report makes important recommendations in this regard. Additional international judges and resources for the judicial sector will help make fair trials and effective criminal prosecution the rule rather than the exception in all of Kosovo. UNMIK Police has done an impressive job of balancing its law-and-order function with its responsibility to create a local Kosovo Police Service. These efforts must be expedited. We are encouraged to see that UNMIK has added new training sites for the Kosovo Police Service and that specialized police units have finally begun to arrive. We were pleased also to see the Mission conclude that "UNMIK Police has significantly enhanced its effectiveness", in part due to close cooperation with the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

The report also lays out important further steps UNMIK and Kosovo's leaders must take in order to build a stable political foundation for the future. Kosovo must move expeditiously to the autonomous self-government called for in resolution 1244 (1999) under institutions designed to protect the interests of everyone. Municipal elections are an important first step. These elections must go ahead as scheduled this fall and we were pleased to see that the mission observed voter registration under way in Kosovo and pledge our continued support for this project.

Recent reports that members of the Serb community in Kosovo are registering for elections, against the wishes of some of their leaders, suggests that UNMIK should redouble its efforts to encourage participation by all groups in these elections.

As High Representative Petritsch noted in Tuesday's meeting on Bosnia, economic reform is also crucial. It will support those leaders in Kosovo willing to speak out against violence and to reject the politics of ethnic hatred. By clarifying the difficult issue of property ownership and adopting strong and sustainable macroeconomic policies, UNMIK will help bring prosperity to Kosovo and strengthen its own administrative structure. Economic revitalization will also help reinforce programmes aimed at promoting the return of refugees and displaced persons, an understandable priority for the Kosovar Serb community. I would note my own country's considerable efforts in this area, to which we have devoted significant resources.

Finally, we join others in underscoring the importance of resolving the problem of the detainees and missing persons. As the mission discovered, this is an emotional and sensitive issue that is blocking progress on inter-ethnic reconciliation. It needs to be addressed on an urgent basis. We have heard Special Representative Kouchner raise this issue on several occasions and we strongly support calls for a special envoy to address the issue.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): I wish to thank you, Sir, for convening this open briefing on the mission of the

Security Council which visited Kosovo from 27 to 29 April. As a member of the mission, I wish to express my personal appreciation to Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury for his inspired leadership of the mission as we sought to fulfil the terms of reference given to us by the Council.

Our visit served to highlight the critical role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in promoting peace, reconciliation and stability and in creating viable and democratic institutions. My delegation wishes to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Kouchner, and to the men and women of UNMIK and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations represented throughout Kosovo for the commitment and enthusiasm which they have brought to the unique, complex and multi-purpose mission.

As the report indicates, our visit provided an opportunity not only to meet with the administering authorities, but also to engage with the representatives of all ethnic communities, to listen to their concerns and to better understand their expectations for the future. As my delegation entirely shares the findings of the mission, I will seek to highlight some issues which are of particular concern. These include the volatile security situation and the rule of law, the return of refugees and the issue of missing persons and detainees.

While there has been substantial progress, violence aimed at minority groups is extremely worrying and, if this continues, efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation will be to no avail. We encourage UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to continue their efforts at consultations at the community level. We welcome the high level of coordination between UNMIK and KFOR.

Despite their limited numbers, the UNMIK Police continue to do their best to provide security. Confidence, however, has to be established between the various groups. While we realize that this is an extremely difficult task, there is no alternative. The leaders of different ethnic groups must engage in dialogue and must display the requisite commitment to the process of peace and reconciliation.

I wish to highlight the need to address the critical shortage of judges, prosecutors and correctional officers. In this regard, I express appreciation to the United Kingdom for the announcement it just made. This has to be addressed if the rule of law is to prevail and an end put to the cycle of impunity. My delegation was impressed by the training given to the new police force as a demonstration of capacity-building. But the UNMIK police also need specialized units, and we hope that this matter will be addressed by member States.

My delegation believes that it is the right of all refugees and displaced persons to be able to return to their homes in safety and without fear. There has to be a structured approach that ensures reintegration and will involve close collaboration between UNMIK, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other organizations. We acknowledge the efforts of these organizations and hope that the necessary assistance and cooperation of host Governments will be forthcoming in reintegrating the refugees. We believe that the issue of returns must be dealt with in a measured and humane manner.

Tackling the issue of missing persons is one of the most fundamental factors in the reconciliation process. As was alluded to in the report, this is an issue that cuts across all ethnic groups and needs to be addressed urgently and comprehensively. My delegation therefore supports the finding in the report that the issue of the appointment of a special envoy for missing persons and detainees should be addressed urgently. We also note that the report draws attention to the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and to the need for additional funds to support the work of exhumations and identification. As the report points out, for example, the Tribunal's forensic experts are hampered in their work by the lack of resources to finance DNA tests.

Another issue of concern to my delegation is the forthcoming municipal elections. We see the civil and voter registration as activities of particular importance, and we believe that all parties must feel that they have a stake in the process. It is therefore necessary to create the conditions for the participation of all ethnic groups, as they must come to feel a sense of ownership and participation in the democratic process.

I also wish to point out that many of the United Nations Volunteers are providing excellent support for the civil and registration process, and we wish to salute the work of the United Nations Volunteers. At the same time, we wish to emphasize the need for the General Assembly to urgently address the question of the staffing table, and we know that this is an issue which will be taken up by the Fifth Committee during its resumed session.

I now wish to turn to the economic situation in Kosovo. Economic recovery as a means of promoting confidence and reconciliation efforts among the people of Kosovo is another major challenge for UNMIK, because, while there have been some improvements, the overall economic picture continues to be grim. The economic situation, coupled with inadequate physical, social and economic security, further exacerbates the situation. Attracting broad-based donor support and investment is certainly one of the ways to move ahead. Unfortunately, this will be difficult if other issues, such as the question of property rights, remain unresolved.

Jamaica wishes to support the work of UNMIK in developing an interim political framework, including the creation of multi-ethnic institutions and a multi-ethnic society, that will lead to peaceful coexistence. Although this process is fraught with difficulty, we urge them to continue. This process demands the cooperation of those with a stake in the long-term development of Kosovo — namely, the people of Kosovo of all ethnic groups. Ethnic hatred and prejudice are unacceptable and will seriously undermine any attempts at creating a sustainable and peaceful Kosovo. This was the message that the mission sought to bring to the people of Kosovo, at all levels, wherever we met them. But we agree that changing attitudes is probably the most daunting task facing the United Nations and the international community in Kosovo. We need to assure the people of Kosovo that the international community will support their efforts to move from a culture of conflict to a culture of peace.

Before concluding, I wish to address the issue of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998). As Chairperson of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1160 (1998), I wish to draw attention to paragraphs 15 and 34 of the report. These paragraphs highlight the discussions that were held with KFOR on the strengthening and monitoring of the implementation of the arms embargo imposed by resolution 1160 (1998). As the report points out, there have been improvements in the situation, and KFOR has continued its recovery of arms inside Kosovo. We wish to emphasize the need for the monthly information on KFOR's activities to be presented to the Committee, as this will greatly assist the Committee in its work.

In concluding, I wish again to pay tribute to the leader of our mission and to the other members of the mission, because I believe that this visit gave us an opportunity not only to see for ourselves but also to bring back to the Security Council our findings, and we hope that these findings will be acted on in the near future.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation expresses its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this open briefing to consider the report of the Security Council mission to Kosovo. It is regrettable that the Council has not been able to accommodate the requests of interested Members of the Organization to participate in the discussion of this important report. Their contributions would certainly enrich the deliberations of the Council. This open briefing on the mission's report, which in any case is already known to the larger membership of the Organization, should be more than a mere formality.

My delegation would also like to express its appreciation to Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh, the leader of the mission, for his lucid introduction of the mission's report. As a member of that mission, I can attest to what has been said by others, and I wish to take this opportunity to pay a warm tribute to Ambassador Chowdhury for his outstanding leadership in the course of the mission.

Ambassador Chowdhury has already highlighted the salient parts of the report, and I do not intend to go over the same ground, other than to underscore a number of points of particular importance to my delegation. With the advantage of having visited Kosovo, my delegation now has a greater appreciation of the fact that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is a difficult and complex United Nations mission and that the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) faces many enormous challenges, which will have to be overcome. These challenges are being addressed in serious fashion by Mr. Bernard Kouchner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, whose tireless efforts for and total commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) deserve the highest praise. It should be noted, however, that the situation on the ground is far from ideal, which requires great political and managerial skills as well as pragmatism, which Mr. Kouchner has brought to bear in administering Kosovo on behalf of the international community as Head of UNMIK.

There has been a tremendous improvement in the security situation, thanks to the efforts of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and UNMIK police. However, the peace and security situation is still fragile and can be put in jeopardy by the slightest inter-ethnic incident, which can

occur at any given moment — and indeed, did occur while the mission was still there on the ground. Hence the importance of the continuing stabilizing presence of KFOR and the law enforcement role of UNMIK police. Equally important is the role of the judiciary in dispensing justice in a fair and impartial manner to all of Kosovo's ethnic groups. My delegation commends the steps taken by Mr. Kouchner to strengthen the law and order situation, particularly the training of a multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Service and the strengthening of the judiciary through the recruitment of international judges and prosecutors who work alongside their Kosovar counterparts. A stable and peaceful Kosovo will depend, to a large extent, on the effectiveness and credibility of such law and order institutions. This is an area that the international community, with the capability to do so, should continue to support, and support generously.

Clearly, one of the most difficult challenges confronting UNMIK is the issue of inter-ethnic relations and the urgent need for forge inter-communal harmony based on reconciliation among the several ethnic groups in Kosovo, particularly between the majority Albanian and the minority Serb populations. Given the long history of suppression and repression of the Albanian Kosovars in the past — culminating in their forced eviction from their homeland, which is still fresh in memory — it would be unrealistic to expect a quick process of reconciliation. A considerable period of time will be required for genuine reconciliation to take effect, but the process must begin now by instituting confidence-building measures aimed at bringing about a degree of trust, tolerance and accommodation between the ethnic groups. In this context, the general apology issued by the Serb community of Orahovac and the positive response of the Kosovo Albanian community were steps in the right direction. We warmly welcome and encourage those positive developments. We earnestly hope that this trend will continue with the active encouragement of Mr. Kouchner and influential members of the international community.

Clearly, no genuine and lasting reconciliation will be possible unless and until the different communities in Kosovo can address and resolve their long-standing grievances against one another and begin to live together as a people, on the basis of the concept of unity in diversity. An important step in that process will be to address the issue of detained and missing persons, which affects both communities, but particularly the Kosovar Albanians, more than a thousand of whom are known to be in prisons in Serbia or are unaccounted for.

In this regard, my delegation strongly and wholeheartedly supports the proposal for the appointment of a special envoy for detainees and missing persons. The appointment of such an envoy has the strong support of all the different ethnic communities in Kosovo, who clearly wish to resolve the matter for the sake of those in their community who have lost loved ones and for the sake of inter-ethnic reconciliation. The early appointment of such a high-level envoy, in the same manner in which one was appointed with respect of the missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, would contribute positively to the final healing of the wounds of the past among the people of Kosovo. The appointment of such an envoy is the earnest and express desire of all of the people of Kosovo and should therefore be responded to positively and expeditiously by the Secretary-General, with the full support of the Council. For such an envoy to succeed in his work it is imperative for all parties concerned to extend their fullest cooperation to him. The authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have a particular responsibility in this regard. Non-cooperation by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on this issue will only reveal the cynical exploitation of the issue by the Belgrade Government, and its true intentions.

The future of Kosovo will depend on the management of the current difficult situation by both the international community and the people of Kosovo themselves. The commitment of the international presence there must be matched by the equal commitment to peace and inter-ethnic harmony by the people of Kosovo themselves. In this regard, my delegation looks forward to the sustained support of the international community for UNMIK and KFOR. We also look forward to the successful conduct of the planned upcoming municipal elections in Kosovo, which will lay a viable foundation for the future. Such a future, of course, cannot fail to take into account many important, complex and sensitive factors, not the least of which is the pertinent issue of the aspiration of the majority Albanian community in Kosovo, as recognized by the Rambouillet Accords, as well as the legitimate rights of the other ethnic minorities in Kosovo. The international community must come to grips with these issues if it is to ensure the long-term solution of the Kosovo question.

UNMIK and KFOR have done much in so short a time. There are, of course, flaws and imperfections in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) that cannot be avoided given the complexity of its mandate. But those are being addressed by the leadership of UNMIK. What is important is for the Council and the international

community to look at the larger picture of what UNMIK is doing, rather than at specific instances of weakness and imperfection in implementation. Important as those are, we should look at them in the broader perspective.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): My delegation commends Ambassador Chowdhury and the other mission members on their balanced mission report. The Netherlands fully associates itself with the praise contained in their report for the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

The report echoes Mr. Kouchner's call for the appointment of a special envoy for detainees and missing persons. My delegation has repeatedly expressed its grave concerns regarding this continuing tragedy, and has called for an end to the indifference to the fate of thousands of missing persons and their families. For these reasons we welcome the strong support of the different ethnic communities in Kosovo for the appointment of a special envoy to address this problem. Of course, the mandate will require some very careful drafting. Meanwhile, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and others should be encouraged to give this pressing issue their particular attention. Obviously, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia also has an important role to play.

As for the present situation in Kosovo, we remain concerned at the continuing violence. Recent incidents have included violence against Russian KFOR soldiers and against moderate Kosovar Albanians. The mission was particularly useful and important in urging all communities to reject such violence and in encouraging peaceful coexistence and cooperation among them.

We are concerned also at the ongoing provocations of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPNB) in the Presevo Valley area. We have noted that Mr. Thaci has called for an end to those activities, but we also note that his call has not so far had the desired effect.

Other recent developments, however, raise hopes that a break with the destructive past may be possible. The mission's report notes that all ethnic communities express the desire to live in peace together even if, due to the recent violent conflict, they are still deeply divided. There is now Serbian participation in the interim structures, even if it is so far limited to observers. And the leader of the Serbian community in Orahovac and representatives of the Roma community have apologized to the Kosovar Albanian community. The Kosovar Albanian reaction to those apologies has been constructive, as noted in the report.

Let us not underestimate the importance of these and other modest initial steps on the road to improved inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo. It is facile, and not very constructive, to note only the problems that still exist. After a decade of death and destruction wrought by Belgrade, it is in fact a small miracle that there are still people left in Kosovo who are ready to break out of this vicious circle and move forward. Those people need encouragement; they are everyday heroes; they show courage and a moral vision that deserves our undivided support.

Another hopeful development lies in the fact that preparations for elections are well under way. We can only hope that the Serbs will realize in time that it is in their own best interest to register. Elections and elected representative institutions will mean an end to undemocratic parallel structures.

Meanwhile, there are indications that public opinion is shifting in favour of moderate elements in all communities, and there is cause for optimism that the United Nations will be able to provide for adequate security. It is all the more regrettable, therefore, that Serb hard-liners and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continue to place obstacles in the way of the successful conduct of these elections. Successful elections form an integral part of the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), and those who want to see that resolution successfully implemented should not stand in the way of registration and participation by all ethnic groups, including Serbs displaced outside Kosovo.

Mr. Cherif (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I am delighted to congratulate you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to consider the situation in Kosovo. It is an opportunity for us to express our satisfaction for the results achieved by the Council mission. In fact, we find that the mission, thanks to the skill of Ambassador Chowdhury, whom we would like to thank, has achieved its objective by sending a very strong and clear signal to all the parties concerned. The exhaustive and useful report that has been presented today informs us about the realities of the situation in the field. It also attests to the willingness of the international community to find a just, lasting and definitive solution to this complex question in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999) of the Security Council.

We consider that the elements set out in the report encourage in-depth thinking with a view to finding new directions and the decisions to take in the future. In that connection, I would like to make the following comments.

It is indispensable to demonstrate realism and to keep in mind that, in the short time since the deployment of UNMIK on 13 June 1999, it has not been possible, despite the efforts, to fully and effectively implement the mandate of UNMIK. Time is a paramount factor to erase hatred and to respond to the expectations of the population. However, we are convinced that the achievements of UNMIK are remarkable and deserve to be commended. In that connection UNMIK should continue to be attentive to the requests and expectations of the Kosovar population.

What is highlighted in the report are numerous positive signs, such as the desire of all the communities to live together in peace. The resumption of contacts between the two communities in Mitrovica, the involvement of Serbs in mixed institutions and the improvement of relations among the communities at the local level — all these factors need to be encouraged. The approach advocated by UNMIK for the establishment of an interim administration to prime an economic recovery will no doubt achieve lasting results, especially by improving living standards and by job creation. Access by the entire population to basic social services is another factor that needs to be strengthened.

The question of detainees and missing persons is still a serious obstacle to inter-ethnic reconciliation. To that end, we think it would be appropriate for the Council to respond urgently to the requests made by the various ethnic communities for the appointment of a special envoy to investigate the situation of detainees and missing persons.

We find it necessary to remedy the culture of impunity that has been rampant in Kosovo. The strengthening of the rule of law, based on impartial and independent justice, will enable the judicial system to play its role by applying and ensuring respect for the rule of law. The return of refugees and displaced persons is a central issue. The international community must promote favourable conditions for the return of refugees and displaced persons. To do so, receiving structures should be strengthened and inter-ethnic confidence should be encouraged.

Finally, we believe that the forthcoming municipal elections will offer a good opportunity for underscoring the willingness of all parties to live together. We hope that they will become actively involved in the process.

All these priorities require financial resources that are adequate, and sustained international support.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I feel it is necessary to note that this mission was positive and useful to assess on the ground what is really happening in Kosovo. Also, allow me to indicate that this mission could not have been successful without the efforts of its head, Ambassador Chowdhury, who, with intelligence, tireless energy, diplomatic tact, common sense and, why not say it, a sense of humour, led us in this very difficult task. His work was so excellent, as is his report as head of the delegation, that my delegation endorses it. Nor can I fail at this time to recognize the support which the mission always received from the Secretariat group so efficiently headed by Mr. Stephanides.

The mission had four objectives, mentioned in paragraph 2 of the report. I think it fulfilled them properly. We can inform the Security Council that resolution 1244 (1999) is being implemented. It has not been fully implemented yet, and it is possible that it may not be fully implemented in the immediate future because of the conditions existing in Kosovo. But it is being carried out. Specifically, it is being implemented properly, reasonably well, in accordance with the mandate contained in paragraph 11 of resolution 1244 (1999). This is the result of the commendable efforts of the international community through KFOR and through the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in the ten months since it was established.

In this connection, I believe that the eloquent words of Ambassador Duval concerning the action of the representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kouchner, compounded by the so-called four pillars of UNMIK, describe the support which we received from all of the local populations, all of the communities, with regard to the work of UNMIK. Argentina is proud of having participated, even modestly, in the work of UNMIK and KFOR. These words of gratitude should also be extended to KFOR and to General Ortuño.

KFOR and UNMIK need material and human resources. They are carrying out their work in very different circumstances, and it is necessary for the

Council to pay attention to the requirements so that they can continue to carry out their work normally.

In Kosovo, the basic administrative functions are being carried out and the reconstruction of infrastructure is being done, as well as other economic reconstruction work. The law and public order are being maintained, human rights are protected and promoted, and the refugees are being encouraged to return. The administration of justice is being organized. A multi-ethnic police is being trained and taught to respect human rights. All of this in an imperfect framework, replete with difficulties and very serious economic and social problems and a high degree of unemployment.

In this framework, the mandate for organizing and supervising the development of provisional institutions for the democratic and autonomous self-government is being carried out, including the holding of elections as established by resolution 1244 (1999). Within this process, administrative functions will be transferred to the authorities elected by the people in the forthcoming municipal elections to be held on 8 October. It is our fervent desire that the Serbian community participate in these elections. We understand the causes of insecurity which they invoke to feel fear and not to register, but we have no doubt that UNMIK, and in particular the work that Mr. Kouchner is carrying out, will tend to prevent situations which justify this legitimate and explainable fear of the Serb community.

As our report says, the insufficient physical, economic and social security is a cause of grave concern, and progress towards peaceful coexistence continues to be fragile.

There are three serious problems in this very serious and fragile situation: first, the continued inter-ethnic violence; secondly, the question of missing persons and detainees and thirdly, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. These three questions feed one another. Violence makes the return of refugees and displaced persons more difficult. The failure to clear up the matter of people who have disappeared or been detained increases resentment which, in turns, incites violence. It is essential to halt the vicious cycle of hatred and resentment and try to set out on the long road to reconciliation.

I do not believe this will be possible if we do not clear up the matter of the problem of people who have disappeared or been detained. In this connection, my delegation supports the designation of a special envoy to deal with this issue. I believe this needs to be done urgently. We hope that once such a person has been named, he will have the support of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in carrying out his task.

The future of Kosovo, over and above what is spelled out in the resolutions, depends on the spirit with which the population implements them. We need to encourage the spirit of reconciliation, without which the necessary conditions for substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cannot be created, as set forth in resolution 1244 (1999). In Kosovo UNMIK is seeking to develop its own institutions for a state of law and democracy. Given democracy and freedom it would be possible to create a legal framework for substantial autonomy. However, this will be difficult, if not impossible, if that fragile autonomous entity must exist as part of a larger totalitarian or authoritarian entity.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): We, too, thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting and welcome the comprehensive report of the Security Council mission on the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. May I also acknowledge and congratulate Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury and all my colleagues who were able to find time to undertake the Mission to Kosovo on our behalf.

First, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation that the Security Council enthusiastically accepted the invitation of the Special Representative, Mr. Kouchner, to visit Kosovo, not only to ascertain the facts on the ground but also to bring the Security Council members closer to the people we serve — in this case, the people of Kosovo.

Secondly, we observe with satisfaction that the Council found this opportunity to share the findings of our mission to Kosovo with the larger membership of the United Nations family. This formula, if replicated, will definitely augur well for us in the days ahead. It is unfortunate that we could not extend meaningful participation to all the Member States that wanted to make a presentation.

My delegation believes that for the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), the international community ought to support the efforts by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in a sustainable manner and at the same time

continue to encourage the ethnic communities in Kosovo to actively participate in the process.

On a daily basis, UNMIK and KFOR have been facing the Herculean task of providing adequate physical security, freedom of movement, particularly for the ethnic minorities, and access to education and health care, as well as of guaranteeing the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, as indicated in paragraph 24 of the report. In the light of the task at hand and in view of the forthcoming municipal elections, this is a critical juncture for contributions to UNMIK.

We welcome the participation of Serbs as observers in the following bodies: the Joint Interim Administrative Structures, the Kosovo Transitional Council and the Interim Administrative Council. My delegation hopes that soon the Serbs will upgrade their participation in these institutions. In this context, we encourage the Bosniac and Roma representatives to join the Transitional Council.

Paragraph 23 of the report also indicates that, in Kosovo, "All ethnic communities expressed a desire to live in peace together". If that is the case, the international community should be able to assist them in moving towards peaceful coexistence in spite of the recent violence. Furthermore, it is exhilarating for us to learn that positive relations between communities still exist at the local level, as demonstrated through the renewal of contacts between leaders of the Albanian and Serb communities in Mitrovica. Therefore, we hope and pray that these contacts will continue and at the end of the day provide an opportunity for confidence-building and reconciliation. It is these efforts that the international community must support and nurture.

Namibia concurs with members of the Security Council mission that the process of reconciliation, rebuilding and resettlement is a protracted one, but it is a process worth engaging in, and we are confident that the foundation derived from the work by the international community will continue to provide the people of Kosovo with the necessary ingredients to reorganize their lives.

In conclusion, let me express my delegation's appreciation and thanks to UNMIK, KFOR and other international humanitarian institutions who are carrying out their work under challenging circumstances.

Mr. Ag Oumar (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I would like to associate myself with previous speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting on the situation in Kosovo, in order to consider the report of the Security Council mission that went to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in response to Mr. Kouchner's invitation to go and view the situation on the ground. The mission made it possible not only to observe the developments in the situation in Kosovo, but also to transmit the message of the Council to all those concerned. I also wish to thank Mr. Chowdhury for transmitting this message to its audience and for introducing the report, which my delegation greatly appreciates.

The findings made by the mission on the ground are significant, and provide an opportunity for my delegation to make the following comments. The ethnic communities told the mission of their desire to live in peace together, but they remain deeply divided, and the wounds will take time to heal. My delegation therefore hopes that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) will become more involved in restoring confidence among the ethnic communities. We believe this is an essential aspect of UNMIK's mandate.

Despite the continuing improvement in the general situation with regard to violence and crime, attacks against minorities are still taking place and this requires ongoing special protective measures to be taken. In this respect, my delegation believes that it is important to speed up the training of police officers. The precarious nature of the material, social and economic security situation is cause for concern and constitutes a major obstacle to the reintegration of the ethnic minorities into public life, and also impedes the return of displaced persons, mainly Serbs and Roma people.

The reciprocal general apologies made by the Serb and Albanian communities are an important sign on the path towards reconciliation and participation in the future development of the community. However, the state of progress on the path towards peaceful coexistence remains fragile. In this connection, the mission noted the firm support expressed by the ethnic communities for the appointment of a special envoy for detainees and missing persons, which my delegation firmly supports.

To remedy the culture of impunity, which is undermining the foundation of the judicial system, there is a need for the recruitment of international judges and prosecutors, as well as for considerable voluntary assistance, in the form of personnel as well as material resources, so that UNMIK can enhance the efficiency of the judicial apparatus in Kosovo. As I said earlier, it is

imperative that UNMIK speed up its training programmes to cope with the lack of police resources.

With regard to the forthcoming municipal consultations, efforts should be made by UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), with the firm support of the international community, to encourage the participation of Serbs, including those who were displaced from Kosovo, to create conditions to that end and also to encourage contacts such as those that the leaders of the two communities have undertaken in Mitrovica with respect to community programmes.

My delegation supports all of the proposals of the mission directed at improving the strategic approaches of UNMIK in carrying out its mandate, including encouraging economic recovery through confidence-building measures and reconciliation at the local level and UNMIK's setting of priorities for economic investment so as to ensure that the available funds are used as effectively as possible. My delegation supports the mission in its belief that in the case of the implementation of resolution 1160 (1998), KFOR should communicate all information on its activities to the Committee established by that Security Council resolution in order to preserve the transparency advocated by the Security Council.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that, as UNMIK has been deployed for less than a year, we must be realistic. We need time to bring about reconciliation among communities that have just emerged from conflict. The international community must be patient and persist in its efforts. UNMIK and KFOR have made remarkable progress in carrying out their mandates, and my delegation congratulates them for their efforts, often undertaken in difficult circumstances. The task is enormous, and the continuation of efforts to ensure the complete implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) remains the absolute priority of the Security Council. Finally, my delegation wishes to pay tribute to the Security Council mission for its detailed report, which responds to many of the questions Member States have been asking themselves in the search for a solution to the problem of the Balkans in general and to Kosovo in particular.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): As one of the members of the Security Council mission to Kosovo, I would like, at the outset, to thank Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh for his excellent leadership, which greatly contributed to achieving the goals of the mission. Let me also convey my appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Kouchner, and to all the staff of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the United Nations Secretariat and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), as well as to the Government of Italy, all of which greatly assisted in making the visit a success.

In my view, the mission to Kosovo was an important undertaking in view of both its timeliness and its mandate. The visit took place at the right time, as it was carried out just some six weeks before the end of an initial 12-month authorized period of international civil and security presences in Kosovo.

As regards its mandate, the Security Council delegation managed to do a great deal. It observed the activities of UNMIK, gained information at first hand about the situation on the ground and conveyed a strong message to all concerned about the need to reject violence and effectively implement resolution 1244 (1999) in full cooperation with UNMIK. It also discussed with the KFOR Commander the important issue of how to strengthen the monitoring of the implementation of the arms embargo.

Against this background, we feel that the mandate of the mission was successfully accomplished. Now, it will be essential for the Security Council to build on those findings and conclusions in order to define its further steps towards implementing resolution 1244 (1999) and supporting UNMIK.

With this in mind, I would like to make the following observations. First of all, it is necessary to pay tribute to the UNMIK and KFOR personnel for their courage and professionalism in discharging their duties under extremely difficult conditions. The progress achieved by all four pillars of UNMIK in their areas of responsibility over the past 10 months, in particular in establishing the interim administrative structures, providing humanitarian assistance and setting up a judicial system, should be welcomed.

We consider encouraging and promising the positive signs of the implementation of the agenda for coexistence and the culture of peace. These can be seen in emerging cooperation between the two major ethnic communities in Mitrovica and Orahovac, as well as in the participation of the Serbs in the Kosovo Transitional Council and the Interim Administrative Council.

At the same time, however, having noticed some positive trends towards the return of normalcy, my

delegation remains concerned about the overall security situation, first and foremost as it relates to the protection of ethnic minorities and their human rights. Although the crime rate in the province has gone down, it remains high.

It is absolutely clear that, unless the proper security of the national minorities is ensured and their basic human rights are properly protected, they will continue to be subject to violence and thus to feel insecure about returning to Kosovo. Undoubtedly, all necessary additional security arrangements should be undertaken on the part of UNMIK and KFOR to reverse this situation.

It seems obvious to us that, after having helped hundreds of thousands of Albanians to return to the province last year, the international community should ensure the safe return from Serbia of about 200,000 non-Albanians of Kosovo. In this connection, we welcome the recent establishment of a Joint Committee on Returns to coordinate these issues.

Given the urgent need to enhance the security situation in the province, as well as to assist UNMIK Police in meeting pressing requirements for specialized units, the Ukrainian Government is prepared to send a specialized police unit of 110 members to Kosovo. In the same context, I should also like to inform the Council that the preparation of the joint Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion earmarked for the KFOR operation is under way.

Now, I should like to address another issue that I believe has become the most sensitive for the members of our mission to Kosovo. Here, I refer to the problem of missing persons and detainees. I have no doubt that all of us were deeply moved by the meetings in Djakovica and other places, during which the Albanian representatives highlighted this problem to us as a major impediment to reconciliation. At the same time, most impressive was also the information on missing persons provided by Bishop Artemje and other members of the Serb National Council at Gracanica, as well as by the Yugoslav representatives at the meeting with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Committee for Cooperation with UNMIK.

In this regard, my delegation wishes to place on record its support for the recommendation to appoint a special envoy of the Secretary-General on missing persons in Kosovo, assigned to learn the fate of missing Albanians and non-Albanians alike during the events of 1999-2000 and to negotiate this matter with the Yugoslav authorities or any other Government. At the same time, we are aware of the fact that the creation of this post will bring no results unless it is supported by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This support is, in our view, preconditioned on the full implementation of all provisions of resolution 1244 (1999), in full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

As indicated in paragraph 16 of the report, the Security Council's mission witnessed the initial phase of the registration process in the UNMIK-Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Europe centre at Dobrecani in the Gnjilane region. While welcoming the start of this campaign, we cannot but be concerned with the well-understood reluctance or refusal of Serbs to participate in it, due to inadequate security conditions and lack of progress in the return of Serb internally displaced persons. Needless to say, everything should be done to ensure participation in civil registration and in the municipal elections of all Kosovo inhabitants, be they currently in or outside the province. Cooperation between the UNMIK-OSCE component and the Yugoslav authorities in this respect is absolutely vital. It is also obvious that the deprival of the right of numerous Kosovo inhabitants outside the province to be part of that campaign might give grounds for a challenge to the legitimacy of its final results.

We were indeed glad to learn from UNMIK that some Ukrainian non-governmental organizations, upon invitation from the OSCE pillar, were helpful in facilitating the process of registration and in evaluating access to civil and voter registration for minority inhabitants of Kosovo.

Now, let me pose a crucial question which all of us, members and non-members of the Security Council alike, may want to address. I do not expect, of course, an immediate answer to the question. How do we see the future status of Kosovo? Do we really want this dubious status quo maintained indefinitely? Are we ready to answer the question: What does substantial autonomy mean? As far as my delegation is concerned, it would be impossible to tackle this issue without the real direct engagement of the parties: the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Albanians of Kosovo. Any decision, however attractive it might look to the international community, will not be workable unless it is directly negotiated and implemented by the parties themselves. With all respect for the efforts of Mr. Kouchner and other major international actors, I do not think that the final decision can be imposed on the parties to the conflict in Kosovo.

I wish to make one final point of a general character. The reconstruction efforts in the region as a whole should be cohesive and not used as a means of political pressure.

In conclusion, let me say that, as the practice of sending Security Council fact-finding missions to zones of conflict has proven its effectiveness and usefulness — and I want also to mention here the missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to Ethiopia and Eritrea — we should utilize this practice more frequently.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Speaking as the representative of Bangladesh, I should like briefly to highlight the following four points.

First, as to the security situation, its improvement in Kosovo calls for the urgent deployment of civilian police personnel in their approved strength. We also believe that a major component in the improvement of the situation is stimulating economic activities and reconstruction. When a large majority of people is busy in economic pursuit, the security situation will improve concomitantly. We also believe that community-based programmes in various parts of Kosovo need to be undertaken extensively to achieve the same objective.

Secondly, as to missing and detained persons, Bangladesh supported the proposal for appointing a special envoy for all missing persons and detainees when the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) was discussed in the Council on 6 March. Now, having personally seen during our mission in Kosovo the agony of hundreds of families, we reiterate our very strong support for the appointment of a special envoy as soon as possible. A speedy resolution of this important issue is needed for the improvement of mutual trust and for confidence-building among the ethnic communities. We strongly feel that this appointment will greatly contribute to the effective implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

Thirdly, as to the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, the improvement of their situation and their return hinge upon the perception of an improvement in the general security situation, a well-functioning judiciary and the settlement of property issues. This is a major undertaking of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and a very important one. We are particularly appreciative of the committed role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in this regard. We believe that the matter should receive the Council's close monitoring.

Finally and fourthly, as to the culture of peace, Bangladesh strongly believes that the foundations of a sustainable peace and reconciliation in Kosovo are to be laid by promoting a culture of peace among all, particularly among the younger generations. Peace education programmes need to be undertaken widely through the involvement of civil society.

Let me conclude by thanking all my colleagues for their gracious and kind words addressed to me in their interventions this morning.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

I have noticed that, in their statements, some representatives expressed regret at the fact that certain countries concerned cannot speak in our debate. I share that regret. Among those countries that cannot speak here is the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. As the country with sovereignty over Kosovo, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a party concerned in the question under our consideration today. The fact that some countries, including the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, cannot speak in our debate represents an abnormal situation that I hope can be rectified in the future.

The Chinese delegation thanks the Security Council mission to Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, for its report. Under the outstanding leadership of Ambassador Chowdhury, the mission has carried out intense, diligent and effective work. It has, among other things, obtained firsthand information through on-site investigations and submitted the report in a most expeditious manner. We would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Chowdhury and other members of the Council mission for their efforts in this regard.

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) have been deployed in Kosovo for almost a year. It is highly necessary that the situation in Kosovo be viewed comprehensively. As the report points out, Mr. Bernard Kouchner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMIK and KFOR have made great efforts under difficult circumstances to implement their mandates. We appreciate their dedication and hard work.

According to the report, and according to resolution 1244 (1999), "The full and effective implementation of the Security Council's mandate requires the sustained effort by UNMIK and KFOR". Here, the Chinese

delegation wishes to comment on a number of questions relevant to the report and the situation in Kosovo.

First, the security situation in Kosovo is still very worrying, especially the physical security situation of Serbs and other minorities. According to some reports, since last June more than 200,000 Serbs and people of other minorities have fled the area and more than 4,000 incidents of violence have taken place. While some of these incidents were anti-Albanian, most were against Serbs and other minorities. Due to the absence of the sense of safety, and given the situation of the Serbs and other minorities, there still exist enormous difficulties in the way of the return of internally displaced persons and refugees from third countries, although UNMIK has emphasized it as a priority. In Pristina, where 40,000 Serbs and Montenegrins once lived, there are now fewer than 100 Serbs. This is indeed a very grave situation.

Secondly, since Serbs and people of other minority groups are not able to return normally to their homes in Kosovo, it is impossible for them to integrate into the society. Without this integration, the strengthening of the multi-ethnic interim administration is out of the question. As the report rightly points out:

> "Efforts to promote cooperation and interface between ethnic communities at the local level, including the establishment of multi-ethnic municipal councils, administrative boards and rapid-impact employment projects, could foster peaceful coexistence."

The realization of this objective depends on the normal return of people of all ethnic groups which, as I have said, is closely linked to the security situation.

Thirdly, as to the upcoming municipal elections, the civil and voter registration has already begun in Kosovo. The report observes:

> "It is unfortunate, however, that all factions of the Kosovo Serb community have chosen not to participate in this process, due to the current lack of physical security and freedom of movement."

The Chinese delegation believes that this is a reality of the political life in Kosovo deserving of the full attention of the Security Council and UNMIK. In our view, careful planning and preparation must be made for the local elections in Kosovo. The security situation must be improved to ensure physical security and freedom of movement, so that the elections can be conducted in a free and peaceful atmosphere. The voter registration process must ensure broad representation, especially that of the minorities. To make this happen, necessary conditions still need to be created; otherwise, there is no way to guarantee the fairness of the elections. Elections in the absence of broad-based participation will only result in the intensification of ethnic conflicts.

Finally, the Chinese delegation would like to stress that Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) must be fully implemented. UNMIK should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the laws, of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and seek its cooperation and participation. Some administrative measures adopted in Kosovo, however, have undermined the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. For example, identification documents have been issued in Kosovo without authorization by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Stamps have been issued, too. The Albanian flag has been flying beside the United Nations flag at the UNMIK compound in Kosovo. Some foreign guests have visited Kosovo without notice to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and some countries, without prior consultation with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, have sent diplomatic representatives to Kosovo, and so on. All this has given the local people the wrong impression that Kosovo is on its way to independence.

Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) reaffirms the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The presence of the United Nations in Kosovo is by no means for the purpose of helping the locals gain independence. UNMIK should get this message across unequivocally to the local people. No error is admissible on this crucial policy. We support UNMIK's proposal to establish a Joint Committee so as to enhance the substantive cooperation between UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The report indicates that ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo "is a long and protracted process, and the international community must be patient and persistent". However, the international community must not sit on its hands regarding any act detrimental to ethnic reconciliation. Any attempt to discriminate against other ethnic groups in Kosovo's public life or to push Kosovo towards independence is dangerous. It will give rise to new disturbances in the Balkans at large, which will ultimately victimize the peoples of all countries in this region.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.